Women of L.A.

by Gloria Lothrop

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Women of L.A. Summary

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Undated

Narrator is unidentified
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Each wave of visitors has praised the glories of Los Angeles. And many have chosen to settle in one of our 36 suburbs in search of a city. As a result of this influx the population of Los Angeles, has doubled nearly every decade through mid-20th century. The visitors became settlers and boasted to others. Whoever asks where Los Angeles is, to him I shall say, across a desert without wearying, beyond a mountain without climbing, in the midst of a garden of 36 square miles there, is Los Angeles.

This epic migration to the Pacific shore is historic record, albeit one that is incomplete for it is a chronicle told by men about their brothers, their fathers, and their heroes. Both in fact and fiction the settling of the West has been documented in terms of the winners of the race, the holders of office, the power brokers, and the professionals. Indeed, it has been a man's world and certain doors still open to them alone.

But what of a California woman? Her story is needed to complete this account. We know of her beauty and her charm. But there must be more to the little woman than glamour and flirtation, than beauty pageants and chorus lines. In a marketplace where two of every five workers are female, women must no longer be anonymous. They too deserve to have their names in the history books.

As we wander among the landmarks of this city, there are reminders of woman's role as mother and wife. And occasionally, a reminder that she was an entity unto herself, energized by her expectations, enriched by her memories and with the wisdom of her years inspiring to those around her. Yes, the Los Angeles woman has two centuries of experience to share. She did more than wait, more than serve and she should not be left to a lonely vigil. Her muted story must be told and she herself celebrated.

In the final days of 1781, they were gathered together, all the colonists, who had come to settle the Pueblo. According to Father Francisco Palóu, they were assigned land from the bank of the river about four leagues southwest of Mission San Gabriel. The town was dedicated to *La Reina de Los Angeles al Margen del Rio de la Porciuncula*.

Standing about the dusty plaza side, were Josef and Maria Navarro, Antonio and Mariana Mesa and other couples who together shared the burden of settling these distant reaches of the Spanish empire. Even before the arrival of the *pobladores*, the arm of empire had extended to Alta California. That claim was made more secure by the eventual establishment of 21 Franciscan missions.

In 1771, the Fort San Gabriel was dedicated. Here neophytes gathered to learn the skills of this alien culture, as well as to study the rudiments of Christian doctrine with its central devotion to Mary, as mother and mediatrix. In near monastic routine, regulated by the mission bells, Indian men herded and farmed, while women busily engaged their spindles and many of their sisters worked as dressmakers and tailoress's. Pregnant women cleaned wool or wheat or pounded bark in the tannery. And during the winter harvest nursing mothers often chose to grind meal for *atole* using stone metates. Mission life was disciplined and carefully balanced between worship, work, and play. Children were encouraged to become proficient musicians. And Sunday afternoons were highlighted by such games as *gallina ciega* or blindman's bluff.

Women rose to positions of responsibility at Mission San Gabriel. Several were respected midwives or *llaveras*. Ignacia Amador was admired as both cook and *curandera* or healer. Most notable however was Eulalia Pérez, who as *partera*, was overseer of supplies. She purportedly lived more than a century and by several accounts was the recipient of Rancho San Pasqual. Others contend however that the grant was actually conveyed to her husband.

Female ownership of ranch land was not unheard of. Many a young bride became a young widow burdened with the responsibilities of ranch administration. Twice widowed, Doña Vicente Sepulveda, mother of twelve children, was for third of a century a ranchera of consequence. She was not alone, there were 66 women grantees in Alta California. One third of them carried forward their claims from concession to patent for over 355,000 acres of land, half of which was in Southern California.

In 1784 a mission soldier, José María Verdugo, was granted Rancho Verdugo. Half of this vast holding ultimately devolved to his daughter Catalina [María Catalina Verdugo]. Finally, in 1828 amidst the streams and canyons, the sycamores and oaks, a home was constructed for the aged and blind daughter. Only a few feet from the oak under which John C. Fremont and Andrés Pico would secretly meet to negotiate the treaty later signed at the Campo de Cahuenga. Not many miles distant, Maria Ygnacia Verdugo de Feliz, laid claim in 1843 to the one and a half-league Rancho Los Feliz, between Los Angeles and the future Glendale.

An unfortunate partnership was to trouble the residents of Rancho Rodeo de las Aguas. In 1852 María Rita [Quinteros] Valdez de Villa reported bitterly that her partner had taken water from her well and borrowed her cows for milk. It was nevertheless a real estate venture she should not have abandoned.

With the secularization of mission lands and the influx of gold seekers to the north, the cattle owning *rancheros* experienced their own bonanza. Dozens of retainers were involved in herding cattle or laboring in the tannery, mill, or kitchen. Within the arched corridors of the *adobe rancho*, there was always room for guests as well as extended family. And above all for the pride of the *Californio*, the children. Families of ten were not uncommon. Gertrudis Pico, who died at 86 left over 100 descendants. Her sister-in-law, Maria Lopez Pico counted 228 who would carry on her family name.

The cattle boom paid for imported goods arriving on New England merchant ships. But Chinese porcelain, brass buttons, and scarce toothbrushes, were but treasured trinkets when compared to the matrimonial bed resplendent with white linens which had been dipped in spring water, washed with homemade soap, and rubbed on rocks until gleaming white.

The Arcadian life was lived at a leisurely pace with a zest for celebration for a *fiesta* or the semi-annual rodeo, but nothing justified several days festivity as did a wedding. The ceremony was often heralded by the appearance of a richly comparison, *caballada* of Palomino horses, preceding the bride who rode side saddle to the nuptials, wearing white satin slippers with upturned toes which had been fashioned by her betrothed.

But not all promises whispered by the betrothed were to be honored, at least so suspected Hortensia Abarta. She was already with child when her fiancé, the dashing Chico Forester, declared that they could not be married since no *padre* was to be found at the plaza church. She responded to the seeming evasion with a mortal pistol shot. Her crime of passion as the court declared it, occurred not far from Wine Street, the center of the *pueblo* social life and where many *rancheros* maintained townhouses along the street. The restoration of which was spearheaded years later by Christina Sterling, there stands the Avila Adobe constructed in 1818. Not many feet away Eloisa Martinez de Sepulveda built a combination residence, hotel, and boarding house in 1887.

While some described Los Angeles as breezy, crude, and violent, *rancheros* were attracted to the town by the horse races, bull and bear baiting, and the bull fights on Playa de los Toros. Weddings, birthdays, christenings, and numerous Saints' days were celebrated with *fandangos*, where citizens danced polkas and waltz and women executed the intricate *la bamba* amid showers of confetti which fell from *cascarones*. Singing and dancing, observed Sir George Simpson, were as common as eating or sleeping.

British and American seamen were fascinated by the bright-eyed ladies, driving one departing merchant man to ruefully observe that the towns cheerless *adobe* walls hid sunny smiled maids with warm hearts who he would surely miss. In 1847 William Heath Davis succumbed to just such blandishment and married Maria Estudillo. The homely Abel Stearns claimed the hand of lovely Arcadia Bandini, who purportedly plied needle and thread in sewing the first U.S. flag in the Pueblo. To escape the wrath of the jealous governor [José María] Echeandía, Josefa Carrillo fled aboard ship with captain Henry Delano Fitch. In 1830, only after the couple had been married in Valparaiso, Chile did they return to face arrest, a trial, and a sentence, which included the gift of a bell of at least 50 pounds, to the church at Los Angeles.

It was such a bell which told the surrender of the *Californios* to American forces. This sporadic local defense had included the use of a four-pound cannon at the battle of Dominguez Ranch, known thereafter as the battle of the Old Woman Gun. For the fieldpiece had been hidden by a loyal *Californiana* during the first American assault upon the town. But the antique artillery could hardly forestall the hastening march of American pioneers who followed the trappers and merchants.

Some of those pioneer women who crossed the harsh and punishing wilderness on their way to California did not survive. Others, like Olive Oatman, became captives. Many shared the sentiments of one outspoken traveler, “if I were to yield to the inclination, I would cry half my time without knowing what for.” No doubt, the tears fell because simple tasks like securing water or storing food supplies presented such difficulties. And also, because the women watched as treasured ties with home, books, and crockery were jettisoned to relieve the burdened teams and all of them shared the sorrow expressed by Sarah Bayless Royce. Having reached her destination, she realized most of what she had known and loved were separated by thousands of miles of menacing wilderness.

In that pioneer vanguard, marched Juliet Breer who with her minister husband and three small children accompanied the jayhawkers on their anguished Southwest detour to California. In her race to survive, Juliet tended the children and the cattle at the rear of the death-defying cavalcade. A jubilant arrival in Los Angeles was followed by the sale of the surviving cattle and her purchase of half interest in a local hotel.

The Breers had been preceded by other adventurers. In 1841, The Workman-Rowland party, the first set to travel the southern route arrived at San Gabriel. Within a year, the group’s leaders had obtained a grant to Rancho La Puente, nearly 49,000 acres. In 1855, John Rowland built a 15-room house on the land for his second wife, Charlotte Gray, a 26-year-old widow. Adjacent to the brick and stucco structure is the John Reed home in which lived Rowland's daughter, Nieves, and her husband, whom she had married before embarking on that historic journey. There they lived as they till the acres which now comprise Covina, West Covina, Industry, Rowland and Hacienda Heights.

Another member of the party also invested in land. Benjamin D. Wilson joined Hugo Reid in the purchase of the old mill of Mission San Gabriel. Reid already claimed nearby lands as a result of a petition he had filed on behalf of his Indian wife, Doña Victoria [Reid], for the 13,000-acre Rancho Santa Anita. In her own name, Doña Victoria also claimed Rancho La Huerta del Cuati, later acquired by Wilson as the Lake Vineyard Ranch.

American families followed each other in quick succession to the land of sunshine. Families thrived despite the passing inconveniences, described by a settler newly arrived from Missouri, “my home is a mud house with a mud floor, the walls are white washed, but the ceiling looks like an old smokehouse and leaks, finally when it rains.”

Within decades the prospering sufferers replaced the simple dwellings with substantial homes, including the Louis Phillips Mansion in Pomona and the Phineas Banning home [Banning House] in Wilmington. This 24-room mansion built by the father of Los Angeles Harbor has been praised as the finest extent example of Greek revival style in Southern California. Further inland, toward the foothills, Lucky Baldwin was to build the Queen Anne Cottage, a monument to Eastlake architecture restored in 1949 under the direction of the late historian Susanna Bryant Dakin.

Closer to the center of Los Angeles, next to the elegant Pico House, William Abbott built the Merced Theatre. The tallest structure in town in 1870 and named for his wife Doña Merced

Garcia. Minstrel shows and melodramas were presented in the second-floor theater and not infrequently the Merced featured divas like Eliza Biscaccianti and the actress Lotta Crabtree. But only Hazard's Pavilion could hold the crowds drawn to hear the beloved Adelina Patti. As she counted her cash payment backstage before each performance, the fans in the audience happily reminded themselves "only to hear you Patti, only to hear you squeak, only to pay $7.00 and starve the rest of the week".

Far removed from the footlights, the average Los Angeles woman busily tended to domestic affairs. In an era before labor-saving devices and processed foods, her home making role was essential for survival. In addition to chores and child rearing, women were expected to oversee the transplanting of cultural traditions to the alien land. Thus, they were encouraged to pursue an increasingly public role. Women's groups organized the ceremonies, and institutions which were the accepted hallmarks of genteel society.

Wives, like Anne Johnson of Chatsworth, were expected to teach Sunday school, organize philanthropies, and encourage the cultural growth in the developing community. Women were quick to take charge, none more than Cecilia Plummer, who during the absence of her sailor husband, efficiently administered the Plummer Ranch in what is now Hollywood. Helen Hunt Jackson visited the tidy Midwestern cottage the Plummers built in 1877. Today it serves as the headquarters of the Audubon Society. The town itself was planned and named by Mrs. Daeida Wilcox Beveridge and her husband, while Mary Penman Moll, the town's first schoolteacher, circulated a petition to have the name of the main thoroughfare changed from Prospect to Hollywood Boulevard. Miss Moll was part of a growing core of women schoolteachers. By 1875, 14 of the 28 Los Angeles teachers were female. A trend which prompted the male principal of the normal school to ask, "Is man to step gracefully down and out leaving the instruction of the next generation to women alone?"

There were reservations expressed about female students as well. An early Angeleno father warned that if his daughter were taught her letters as well as music and embroidery, she would spend all her time writing to her sweetheart. That it did not pay to educate girls, was an opinion again expressed in the *Los Angeles News* in 1871. Nevertheless, as early as 1855, the young ladies were admitted to the city's first school building and placed under the supervision of Miss Louisa Hayes.

They were also instructed at early private schools, established by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul and others. In 1854, Miss Hoyt School opened to three boys and 12 girls, who had passed her rigorous entrance exam. Before the end of the century The Cathedral School, The Bishop School, and Marlborough School for girls, were educating young women in traditional subjects, as well as domestic arts and business methods. For by 1894, the majority of the city's 120 stenographers were female. At Los Angeles High School, a group of enthusiastic girls secured a promise from visiting board members that a basketball court would be built for them.

The prosperity and population growth initiated by the real estate boom of the 1880s encouraged the establishment of several new colleges. At USC's [University of Southern California] Whitney Hall, Mrs. Jennie Allen Bovard, taught English language and literature to the 53 students who constituted the first class. In 1887, both Occidental and Pomona Colleges opened their doors. In

her book *Adobe Days*, Sarah Bixby Smith, writes with nostalgic humor about the beginnings of what was to become the associated Claremont Colleges. A group which would eventually include a college for women endowed by Ellen Browning Scripps and dedicated to the firm belief that a college must develop its students to think clearly an independently and develop in them the ability to live confidently, courageously and hopefully. This was encouraged by providing role models in public leadership. An example of this is a doorway dedicated to Susan Miller Dorsey prominent Los Angeles Superintendent of Schools. In turn, members of each graduating class have left their declaration along Scripps sheltered corridors before departing to take their places in the world.

And indeed, the growing city needed workers to meet the needs of a thriving marketplace and booming real estate. Women landowners were not uncommon, in fact 10% of all western homestead claims have been filed by women. Settlers like Melvina Lot, from Montreal, profited from judicious investments in property on Olive Street facing Central Park. Although she could not match the fortune of Emma Summers, the "Oil Queen of Southern California," who was described as fighting her rivals with fire and sword and always had the black flag raised.

The 1890s *Southern Pacific Directory* for Los Angeles, list 57 businesses having women proprietors. In addition to running the usual restaurants and boarding houses, women worked as gold stampers and even fencing instructors. In fact, by 1890, American women occupied 216 of the 303 occupations listed by the Bureau of the Census. One job rarely filled by a woman was that of lighthouse keeper. A position held in 1874 by Miss Mary L. Smith, who operated the light at Point Furman, at the southern tip of San Pedro harbor.

Shortly after the turn of the century, Madge Connell established the Connell Mortuary at Tenth and Grand. And at Eighth and Beacon Street, Agnes Woodward ran her school of artistic whistling. Today, little remains along Verdugo Road of the once thriving poultry ranch owned by Kara Smart Root. A four-horse team regularly carried Indian agent Clara True, to the many reservations located in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. And from her house at First and Normandy, Clara Shortridge Foltz ventured forth each day to work as the city's first woman assistant District Attorney. She had been instrumental in drafting legislation which allowed women to practice law in California and she remained a dedicated advocate of equality.

In contrast, Jessie Benton Frémont's efforts appear conventional, yet it was the national success of her writing which saved the declining fortunes of her family. The terms to date might also be applied to the career of Ellen Beach Yaw. But there is no less reason to be proud of her fame as a singer, her success as a teacher of such entertainers as the Duncan sisters and as composer of California, recognized as the state song in the 1920s.

From her verdant corner of Pasadena now the home of the Pasadena Historical Society, Eva Scott Fényes, captured the fast fading life of early California in hundreds of watercolors which are treasured collectors works today. To the northwest in the sandy soil of San Dimas, Emma Hawks, former preceptress of the state normal school, successfully grew lemons and oranges. While North of the intersection of Fair Oaks and Orange Grove where today concrete freeway stretch to the foothills, Jeanne Carr, transformed 42 acres into a blooming garden and an

experimental agricultural station in the 1870s. To the Carr's home, Carmelita, on the site of the Norton Simon museum many came to study her vineyards, orchards and ornamental plantings.

Another Pasadenan, Minerva Hamilton Hoyt responded to the urgent demand for the protection of desert life and the conservation of desert beauty spots. Her dream of a desert park became the Joshua Tree National Monument. Perhaps the most articulate 19th century California woman environmentalist, was Mary Austin, who inveighed against the Boomer's disregard for urban planning and prophesied doom for Los Angeles as a consequence of the city's exploitive acquisition of water. But the rushing gallons of Owens and Colorado River water were needed for the expanding population and also for the gentle aliens, plants unaccustomed to these semi-arid conditions.

Late 19th-century horticulturist like Kate Sessions had recast our floral environment. She alone introduced more than 143 varieties of plants for commercial use, including the poinsettia, the crate myrtle and our city flower, the bird of paradise. Women worked the land and harvested the crops, and no one was more convinced of their ability than Harriet Russell Strong, whose fame as an agriculturalist and water expert gained national acclaim. She was undaunted in her call for more women farmers.

Along with the settlers came the health seekers and of course, the vacationers. Women joined in developing the spas and convalescent homes. For example, The Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society was instrumental in establishing what was to become The City of Hope. Women also staff the recreational facilities from Yosemite to the San Gabriels. It was appropriate therefore, that until recently Mount Lukens, the highest point in Los Angeles, was known as Sister Elsie Peak. In honor of a nun who operated an orphanage in the La Canada-La Crescenta area.

Among the tourists who came to winter in the sun, several brought fame to the Southland. In 1903 and 1905, Mabel Higgins progressed from victories at the Annandale Country Club to the semifinals of the British Women's Championships. She was the first American woman golfer so honored. Also, in 1904, Santa Monica resident May Sutton Bundy with her hair in a pompadour and rackets under her arm, went to Wimbledon to win the World Championships, a triumph she repeated 18 years later.

In 1880, Mary Foy was named the third librarian of Los Angeles, with the help of Ina Coolbrith of the Oakland Library, she was introduced to the profession and the intricacies of the new classification system. Her four-year tenure is a tribute to efficient management and library organization. Today her home has been restored and serves as a business office near Sixth and Witmer Streets.

One book that did not appear on the L.A. library shelves was a souvenir guide of 1884, which contained discrete advertisements offering female companionship. Among them was one for Cora Phillips' Golden Lion, the entrance of which was guarded by two stone kings of the jungle. In an era when women had only limited right to property, of marginal education, rare access to the professions and were often the unwitting victims of accrual double standard, the exploitive world of prostitution often became a seemingly inescapable alternative. Discrete newspaper ads sustain the illegal operations along High Street, Alameda Street and Calle de los Negros.

The response of Los Angeles women to this historic exploitation was the establishment of a boardinghouse for unmarried working women, partially subsidized by the women's enormously successful flower festival. Another such dwelling, the Mary Andrews Clark home, was built in 1913 by Los Angeles philanthropist William Andrews Clark. For three generations this was facility dedicated to Clark's mother, provided rooms for 150 women. Today it is a branch of the YWCA. Another social need was addressed by Mrs. Elizabeth Hollenbeck. In the 1890s she provided a trust fund, as well as her home for the establishment of a home for the aged which still serves as a model for retirement living.

Reformers seize the opportunity to improve this town which had been known as the "Queen of the Cow Towns," which most call sprawling and some call simple. Foremost among the colorful reformers was Sister Aimee, the Titian-haired would-be evangelist. Aimee Semple McPherson adopted this town, although it already had enough churches to suit all shades of religious persuasion. Angelenos soon flocked to her sermons on the Foursquare Gospel and viewed her tableaus. She was a triumph of church showmanship who pioneered radio evangelism and ran a soup kitchen in the depths of the Depression.

The healing of physical ills, as well as the healing of souls, was not usually considered woman's work. As late as 1886, there were only four women doctors in the city. Among them was Elizabeth Follansbee, who also served as instructor in gynecology at the USC [University of Southern California] School of Medicine. Within a decade she was joined by a few others like Dr. Mary Sawtelle, who published a radical medical journal that condemned restrictive corsets and advocated exercise for women.

Women were clearly on the move, the sidewalks filled with them and if we pause to examine the streets themselves bore testimony to their labor and dedication. The bells, which mark El Camino Real, the "Royal Road" first trod by sandaled Franciscans, were originally forged and erected by Mrs. Armitage [Harrye] Forbes. The project was the first funded by grants from local women's clubs, who also financed the restoration of several mission gardens.

The restoration of one mission facility, the Old Mill of Mission San Gabriel reflected the commitment of its owner Mrs. James R. Brim. Similarly, the historic Pío Pico Mansion, known as El Ranchito, was finally saved from a road crew by Harriet Strong, who at one time had lived in the house and subsequently over saw its restoration.

The city of Montebello now maintains the Soto Sanchez Adobe, whose south section was built in 1845 by the widow Doña Casilda Soto de Lobo. Most recently, it was owned and restored by Mrs. Josephine Scott Crocker.

Another architectural landmark is represented by the Wynyate Mansion, built in classic Queen Anne revival style. The home of author Margaret Collier and her husband, the first mayor of South Pasadena, incorporates the irregular plan, surface detailing, wrap-around porches, and corner treatment typical of this picturesque late 19th-century style.

Another turn of the century style, *chateauesque*, is clearly reflected in the Doheny Mansion. Bequeathed by the late Countess Estelle Doheny to Mount Saint Mary's College, and also, to some degree, in the monumental Rindge Mansion. This was the Los Angeles residence of May Rindge, sometimes called the "Queen of Malibu," who was bitterly defeated in her attempt to prevent the building of the Pacific Coast Highway across her ranch.

By the early 20th century, California architects Greene and Greene had helped develop a distinctive domestic architecture known as the California Bungalow or the Craftsman style. The Pasadena home of Lucretia Garfield, widow of President James Garfield, with its stone chimney, cedar shingles, and exposed rafter typifies the style. However, the characteristic informal scale more typical of Craftsman architecture is best reflected in the home of the late Alice Coleman Batchelder, an accomplished musician dedicated to popularizing the music of American composers and founder of Pasadena's Coleman Chamber Concert.

The eclectic quality of Southland architecture is clearly reflected in the Grace Nicholson home constructed in 1924. The building with its traditional North Chinese courtyard, accented by roof tiles, finials and stone carvings brought from China, now serves as headquarters for the Pacific Culture Foundation.

During the early decades of the 20th century, another architectural monument appeared on the banks of the Arroyo Seco. Mrs. Carrie Ann Jones bequeathed $50,000 for the first building and in 1913 the cornerstone was laid for the Southwest Museum. A woman's fortunes subsidized another architectural landmark on 38 acres in East Hollywood purchased in 1913 by oil heiress, Celine Barnsdall. There was to be a theater complex and an artist colony. The highlight of this master plan, which remains today, is Hollyhock House, an example of prairie-style architecture which Frank Lloyd Wright embellished with pre-Columbian motifs and designs featuring Miss Barnsdall's favorite flower the Hollyhock.

Another architectural landmark is perhaps the last significant surviving example of Irving Gill's work in Los Angeles. The clean edge, two story stucco dwelling, so typical of Gill was constructed in Pasadena by Mrs. Paul Biltmore in 1911.

Among these architectural gems there are designs by women architects as well. The Los Angeles Examiner building was designed by Julia Morgan, the first woman to graduate from the Beaux-Arts Academy of Paris, who is also well known for her work on the San Simeon estate. Her plans for the Pasadena YWCA reflect her clear ability to incorporate various architectural styles. In this case, she has gracefully accented a functional multi-use building with the best of the Mission Revival style. In contrast, Morgan's Hollywood Studio Club, harkens back to her Beaux-Arts training in its elegant evocation of the Renaissance.

The impact of women on the architectural scene manifested itself in yet another way, in the hills bordering Hollywood. In 1920, Mrs. Christine Wetherill Stevenson, head of the Theater Arts Alliance, used a unique natural theater to stage a life of Christ she had written, which she entitled, *The Pilgrimage Play*. Not far from the Pilgrimage bowl was Daisy Dell, the future site of the Hollywood Bowl, which was secured through the combined efforts of Mrs. Stevenson,

Mrs. Chauncey Clark and chocolate heiress, Myra Hershey, who owned the nearby Hollywood Hotel.

The successful initiation of the summer concert season resulted from the total dedication of Mrs. R. D. Mason Carter, one of the leaders of the city's community chorus. Certainly, no community effort has enriched the cultural life of Los Angeles as has the Los Angeles Music Center. It would be difficult to find another local enterprise which reflects the dedicated labor of women volunteers, and the steadfast dedication of one woman. It is most appropriate therefore, that the main concert hall is called the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

A survey of historic landmarks at Twelfth and Central, should include more than the Coca-Cola building. On this same block was located the office of the *California Eagle*, the Black newspaper edited by the intrepid Charlotta Bass, who twice served as vice presidential candidate and throughout her tenure as editor, was an undaunted champion for civil rights. But Miss Bass was not the only Black woman to accomplish amidst adversity. The birthplace of Ralph Bunche on East 40th Place, should also be a monument to his grandmother Lucy Johnson and his aunt, author Nellie Johnson.

The famed Dunbar Hotel the hostelry for Black entertainers visiting early Los Angeles, was owned by Black community leader Dr. John Somerville and his wife, Dr. Vada Jetmore Somerville, an early graduate of the USC School of Dentistry.

The accomplishments of Black women in Los Angeles began with Biddy Mason, who assured of her freedom from servitude in the court of judge Benjamin D. Hayes in 1856, acquired through hard work and careful investment, property between Spring and Broadway and Third and Fourth. And a substantial fortune which was used to help the less able and to establish such institutions as the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Biddy Mason's name has been given to a planned community center for Black history and culture in the former residence of Mrs. Jesse L. Terry, on East Adams Blvd. Across the street stands the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club, a facility built in 1913 to provide a home for self-supporting young women and serve as a community and vocational education center.

The modest Mission Revival tower stands as a tribute to the efforts of the city's Black women volunteers, as a matter of fact there are other church towers which are proud testaments to women. The campanile of Saint Vibiana’s Cathedral reminds us that the city is dedicated to an early Christian heroine, as well as to the Queen of Angels. Possibly, the oldest Protestant church in the San Gabriel Valley is the Church of Our Savior, constructed in 1871 with funds provided by Mrs. Amos Vinton, a Rhode Island philanthropist.

The steeple of the First Unitarian Church on West Eighth St. stands as an enduring testament to the paragon among city builders, the mother of clubs, Caroline Severance. Although she and her husband planned to quietly retire in Los Angeles, challenges presented by the growing city soon engaged them both. At their home El Nido, the present site of the John Tracy Clinic, a Sunday evening lecture series soon followed the Sunday morning Unitarian church service. Without question however Madam Severance greatest impact, resulted from her conviction that all things were possible to women if they organized. The result was the establishment of a Friday Morning

Club. It became the city's first successful woman's club, despite warnings appearing in a *Los Angeles Herald* editorial, that virtue and intellect were incompatible in women. Undaunted, Severance and her colleagues campaigned for juvenile detention facilities, built rest havens, organized the first free childcare center and one of the first kindergartens in the United States. They crusaded to save the Sequoias and assured that Board of Education offices would remain nonpartisan and they annually contributed a float to the flower festival. The tribute [from the city to Severance's building] is the street sign on West Adams, but evidence of their benefactions span the city. Caroline Severance's club work was worldwide, leading her to assume the first presidency of the International Federation of Women's Clubs.

Local women enrich the life of the city through numerous club efforts. The Assistance League of Southern California, founded by Mrs. Hancock Banning and the Wilshire Ebell Club, which Harriet Russell Strong helped organize, sponsored many civic philanthropies. Since 1925, the Junior League of Los Angeles, has been involved in a variety of projects which once organized are turned over to sustaining organizations. These projects have included several efforts associated with the Children's Hospital, which Mrs. Joseph Banning helped establish, as well as guides to Los Angeles, many services for the blind and the organization of the Junior Arts Center.

Caroline Severance and fellow clubwomen recognized that to have a significant effect upon the development of the city, it was crucial that women be given the vote. Their successful campaign resulted in approval of the ballot measure in California in 1911. Women had the vote and greater access to the public arena. Despite dire predictions of domestic neglect, they quickly reconcile their public and private roles. In part, the burden was lightened by the advent of the auto, despite warnings that driving would disfigure the leg, Southland housewives embraced automation and they soon found themselves committed to delivering their children once obstetrically, and ever afterwards by car.

Two world wars brought changes in production as well as new settlers to the Southland. The intended expansion nearly overshadowed the original Pueblo. Throughout it all women continued to work, raise funds, speak out for causes, amidst an ever-increasing chorus of support. They were surrounded as well by a growing number of women achievers whose success encouraged others. From an improvised airfield at Wilshire and Fairfax, Amelia Earhart went on to break flying records. Jacqueline Cochran Odlum acquired her instrument rating by pinch hitting as a flight attendant on bumpy commercial flights up and down the California coast. Such a litany of solo successes should also include the accomplishments of Caroline Chan, L.A.'s first Chinese public school teacher.

The story of this vanguard of women has been told by journalists like Adela Rogers St. John and city editor, Agnes Underwood. There have been increasing numbers of stories about women mayors like Phyllis Seton and Doris Davis. About dedicated city makers like Olive Barrett, Sybil Brand, and Valley Knudsen. About public servants like Yvonne Burke, Shirley Hufstedler, and Joan Dempsey Klein. It is still true that five out of every seven women employed by the city work in the lowest-paid positions, but women leaders are emerging. Councilwomen Pat Russell and Joy Pikus and deputy mayor, Grace Montañez Davis, lead one to believe that one day soon,

Miss Mayor will lead the City of Angels. Women will lead as they have built. The city is there is as well, and its story is found in their faces and in their reflections.

The Los Angeles woman has something to say; she celebrates a city built by men and women and she offers inspiration to the daughters who follow. It is the twilight of two centuries of Los Angeles history and Carolyn Severance's words should greet tomorrow "we have reached the dawn of a glorious tomorrow; it is a glad resplendent day."

End of recording

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